

Ours is a message of reconciliation.

Most of us like to think of ourselves as being relatively tolerant, broadminded individuals, preferring to give the benefit of the doubt whenever possible, to those who differ with us. No one wants to be thought of as a “know it all,” or a “narrow minded bigot.” Our society in recent years has become increasingly diverse and pluralistic, and traditionally held religious and moral beliefs are no longer widely held in the popular culture. Those who resist the growing secularization of governmental, educational, and even religious, institutions are labeled as intolerant, religious extremists, who wish to impose their narrow minded beliefs on society.

The truth is, however, that there is no virtue in being “broad minded.” What is there to admire in a person who has no convictions or firmly held beliefs? As Christians, we should be “sticking out like sore thumbs.” We should be living our lives in radically different ways from mainstream society.

At the same time, however, we should be viewed as both loving and non-judgmental towards those who have not yet “found their way” back to God. Jesus reserved most of His harsh words for the self-righteous religious elite, and seemed most welcoming and forgiving towards “sinners” and outcasts of society. Without condoning their sin, He taught them that God loved them and so did He. Our ministry should be one of reconciliation, not judgment, “for God was in Christ, reconciling the world to himself, no longer counting people's sins against them. And he gave us this wonderful message of reconciliation.” (2 Cor. 5:19)